

6 October 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: Associate Director-Management  
National Foreign Assessment Center

FROM : Noel E. Firth  
Director of Imagery Analysis

SUBJECT : Justification for Senior Intelligence Specialist

Senior analysts in OIA, as in other offices, reach a point in their career where they must decide either to pursue the management route to further advancement or remain as an analyst with its limitations in grade and salary. This results in some people becoming managers who are not well equipped for it and some analysts who are frustrated by the fact that their contribution is not matched by their rewards.

There has been a great deal of progress made in recent years in the discipline of imagery analysis, and if we are to foster a continuation of this progress, we need to retain some of our brightest and most imaginative analysts in the analytical field.

Although the responsibility of the supervisor may be more demanding and the skills of a truly good supervisor more rare, the benefits derived by the Agency and the U.S. Government from a significant analytical breakthrough are in themselves worthy of reward. Our experience indicates that the most innovative analysts have a thorough understanding of imagery analysis techniques, are quick to recognize the application of imagery to an intelligence problem, and have a high degree of initiative. They may or may not have traits and characteristics that would make them good supervisors.

There are at the present time in OIA a few analysts whose continuous effort over a period of years has been clearly exceptional. Their contribution to the intelligence production efforts of OIA and the Agency has been both unique and significant. Typically, these are the people who have made important contributions to advancing the state-of-the-art of imagery analysis. These are contributions from which the Agency will continue to derive benefits in future years. Having reached the

GS-13 grade level with many years service ahead of them, there is no alternative path they can follow for advancement. QSI's and monetary rewards though beneficial, do not provide the long term recognition and rewards of promotion to a higher grade.

We believe there is as legitimate a requirement in OIA as in other production offices for an alternate career development path for these few select analysts to follow, and that there would be a very real utility in providing at least four senior analytical positions in OIA at the GS-14/15 grade level. (If our T/O is upgraded as currently requested, these positions would be at the GS-15/16 level.)

Noel E. Firth

Attachment:

Requirements for Senior Intelligence Specialist

Attachment

Requirements for Senior Intelligence Specialist

The analyst has demonstrated a thorough knowledge of imagery analytical methods and the utilization of various pieces of specialized equipment available to him in the performance of his duties. He/she has demonstrated complete mastery of assigned areas of substantive responsibility. He/she has demonstrated exceptional capabilities for performing the research, analysis, and report drafting on major intelligence production efforts, must possess a demonstrated capability for developing new imagery analytical methods that enhance the utilization of imagery in solving complex intelligence problems.